

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 16, 17, 31 and 32 without prejudice.

Please substitute the following claims for the pending claims with the same number:

12. (Currently amended) A method for limiting the operational life of software in a network environment, the method comprising:

- providing a [software application] program applet embedded with an associated password to a client via a network;
- receiving from said [software application] program applet via said network a request for information stored in a restricted access storage area, said request comprising said associated password;
- authenticating said password;
- thereafter providing said information to said [software application] program applet via said network while said associated password is valid; and
- invalidating said password coincident with an invalidation event.

13. (Previously amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein said invalidating comprises invalidating said password at a predetermined time.

14. (Previously amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein said invalidating comprises invalidating said password after a predetermined elapsed time from when said request was received.

15. (Previously amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein said invalidating comprises invalidating said password upon the detection of a loss of communication with said client.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein said providing comprises generating said password at a server upon receiving said request at said server.

27. (Currently amended) A network-based software authentication system comprising:

a server comprising:

- a password generator;
- password validation apparatus;
- a restricted-access storage area;
- a [software application] program applet; and
- invalidation apparatus;

wherein said server is operative to:

- a) cause said password generator to generate a password;
- b) provide said [software application] program applet embedded with said password to a client via a network;
- c) receive a request for information from said [software application] program applet via said network, said request comprising said associated password;
- d) authenticate said password using said password validation apparatus;
- e) provide said information to said [software application] program applet via said network while said associated password is valid; and
- f) invalidate said password using said invalidation apparatus coincident with an invalidation event.

28. (Original) A system according to claim 27 wherein said invalidation event comprises the arrival of a predetermined time.

29. (Original) A system according to claim 27 wherein said invalidation event comprises the elapsing of a predetermined elapsed time from when said request was received.

30. (Original) A system according to claim 27 wherein said invalidation event comprises the detection of a loss of communication with said client.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Original) A system according to claim 27 wherein said password is generated at said server upon receiving said request at said server.